GEORGE MANN · TAZIO BETTIN · ENRICA EREN ANGIOLINI · ROB STEEN

WARHAMMER 40,000

WILL OF IRON

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WILL OF IRON
PROLOGUE

SPACE MARINE
BALTUS

Part of a Lion's Blade Strike Force, containing Dark Angels Space Marines of the 2nd Company, Baltus is devoted and loyal. The Calaphrax campaign sees him advancing into the inner circle of his Chapter – and experiencing the dark revelations such progress entails.

INTERROGATOR-CHAPLAIN
ALTHEOUS

Somber, serious and dedicated, Altheous carries the burden of knowledge. He has seen much during his long life, and knows all the secrets buried in the Dark Angels' past. In Calaphrax he faces the ultimate test of what must be done to keep them hidden from the universe.

INQUISITOR
SABBATHIEL

Astor Sabbathiel is relentless in the pursuit of her goals, to the extent that she often engages in questionable methods to get to the truth. Three Acolytes and a Jokaero Weaponsmith assist her in her quest to root out heresy and Chaos wherever they may be found – wherever the trail leads.

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TELL ME WHAT YOU SEE.

"A VEIL HAS BEEN LIFTED.

"A STORM ABATES.

"AND ANCIENT SECRETS ARE REVEALED.

"YOUR QUARRY IS SWIFT TO MAKE THEIR MOVE; THEY SEEK TO OBFUSCATE.

"THEY SEEK..."

"INTERROGATOR-CHAPLAIN ALTHEOUS. YOU HAVE FOUND IT?"

"WHAT WE SEEK LIES ON EXYRION, **MASTER SERAPHUS.** THE FORMER CAPITAL OF THIS SECTOR."

"THEN READY OUR FORCES."

"THAT WHICH THEY MIGHT ONLY FIND WITHIN THEMSELVES."
WE MAKE PLANETFALL WITHIN THE HOUR.
"WE KNOW WHAT WE MUST DO."

"YET THEY ARE BLINDED BY THEIR FAITH, THEIR THIRST FOR REDEMPTION, AND IN THEIR BLINDNESS THEY SHALL RAIN FIRE AND DESTRUCTION UPON THOSE WHO WOULD LOOK TO THEM FOR SALVATION."
FOOM
KRA-KOOM
BALTUS! ON YOUR FLANK.
BRAPPA
CRRKK
AYE, BROTHER.
BRUDDA
IT IS ALREADY DEAD.

"THEY SHALL SEEK -- AND FIND -- ALLIES AMONGST THE RUINS OF THEIR FORMER DOMAIN."
IT IS A FINE ENGINE OF WAR, BARON.
IT SHALL SERVE THE EMPEROR WELL.
CHARGE!

"AND STAND AGAINST AN ARMY FORGED IN IRON AND BLOOD."
CRACK
THOOM
BRUDDA
BOOM
AND SO THE LION SAYETH SMITE, AND THEY DID SMITE, AND ALL WHO CAME BEFORE THEM FELL.
THOSE WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS IN THEIR HEARTS FOUND SALVATION IN THE GLORY OF THE EMPEROR'S LIGHT.
SHRIIIP
THOSE WITH DARKNESS IN THEIR SOULS SOUGHT THE COMFORT OF DAEMONS, AND DID BECOME UNTO DAEMONS THEMSELVES.
AND TO THEM THE LION SAYETH DIE, AND THEY DID DIE.
THUD
"YET ON PANDROSAR, THEY WILL FACE THEIR GREATEST ENEMY..."

"THEY WILL FACE THEMSELVES."

"I SEE THESE THINGS.
"I SEE DEATH.
"I SEE FIRE.
"I SEE REVELATION."

YOU SPEAK IN RIDDLES.
AND I HAVE NO TIME FOR RIDDLES.
I SPEAK IN PAST-LIES AND FUTURE-TRUTHS.
WHAT YOU SEEK IS HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT.
THE QUESTION, INQUISITOR SABBATHIEL...

IS WHETHER YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO FIND IT?
TO BE CONTINUED...

WARHAMMER 40,000

WILL OF IRON
PROLOGUE

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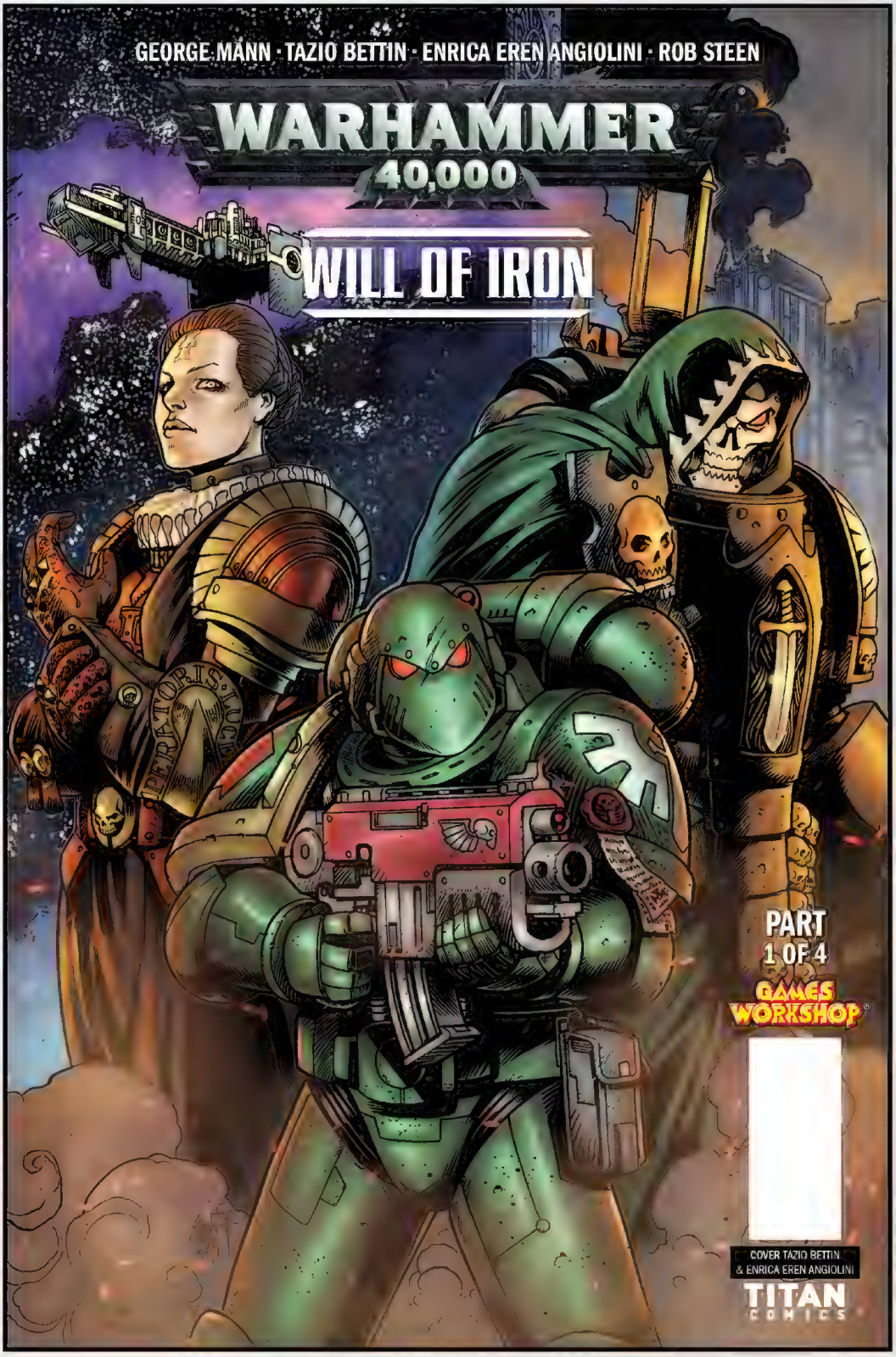


#1 Cover A by Tazio Bettin and Enrica Eren Angiolini

EXYRION.
THE DEAD WORLD.
LOST BEHIND THE VEIL FOR AN ETERNITY.
ITS STREETS NOW POPULATED BY NOTHING BUT FILTHY SPAWN.
BRRAPPA

FOOM

BRAKKA

BRAKKA

FALL BACK TO HIGHER GROUND!

RAAAAGH!

FWASSH

GET DOWN!

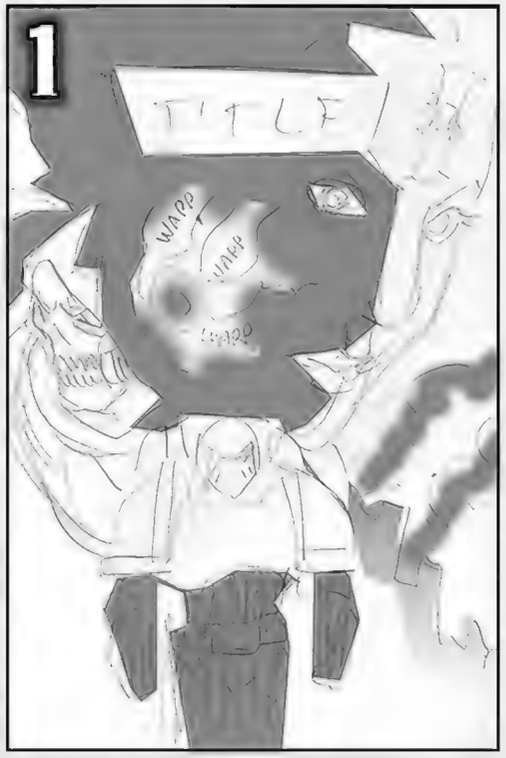
BOOM

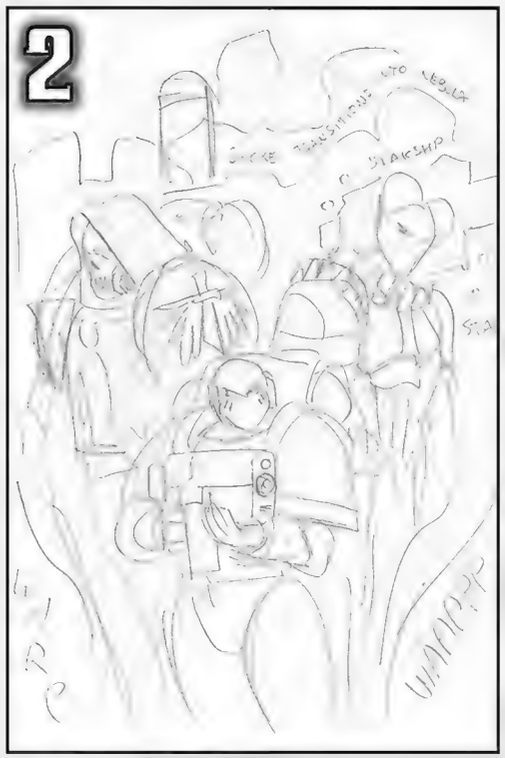
AND THEN THE LION SAID *'HE SHALL FALL'*, AND HE FELL.

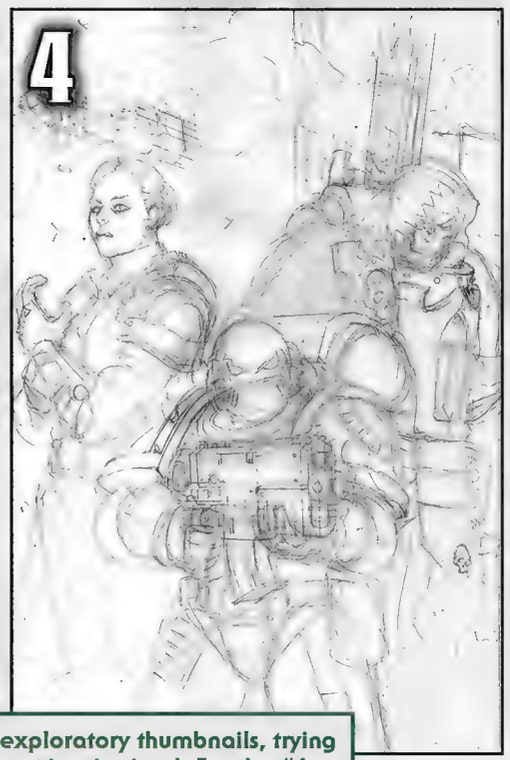
KRAKOOM

TO BE CONTINUED...

ANATOMY OF A COVER







Every cover starts with a series of exploratory thumbnails, trying to work out the strongest and most iconic visual. For the #1 cover, Tazio tried eight different compositions before settling on this movie poster-inspired shot of the three series leads. From there, it's a case of refining the rough through several stages.

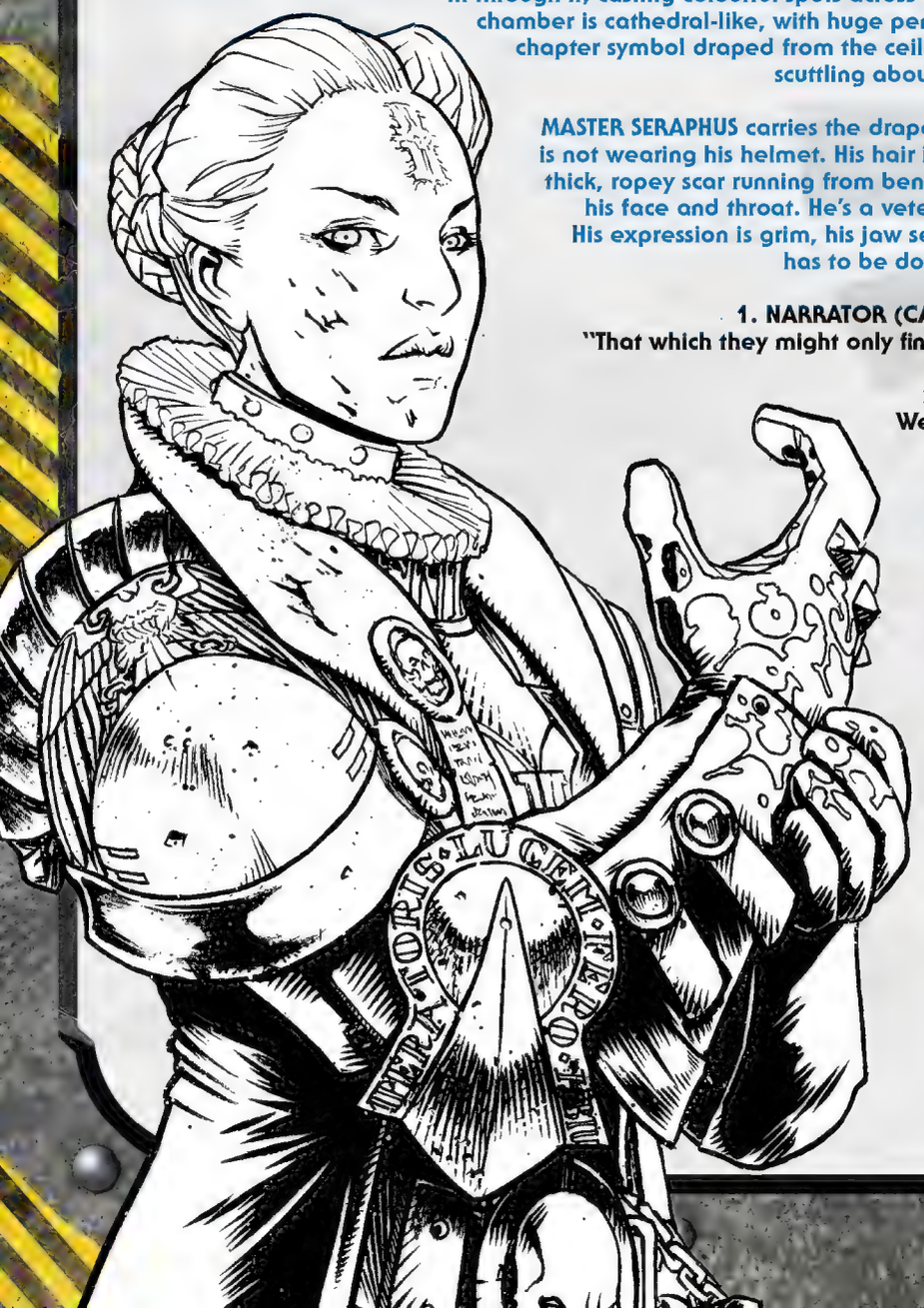
At the pencils stage, Tazio swapped the positions of Inquisitor Sabbathiel and Interrogator-Chaplain Altheous to make for a stronger composition. The raised, imperious chin of Sabbathiel contrasts with the lowered, menacing tilt of the helmet of Altheous – and both loom large in the life of Baltus.

SCRIPT EXCERPT

Having worked and written for Warhammer 40,000 for years on Black Library and Games Workshop books, George Mann is well-versed in capturing the visceral grit and epic action of the Warhammer 40,000 universe on the printed page! But how does his prose translate into a comic strip? Here's a small taste of the script for #0, which Tazio and Enrica translated into the story you've just read.

Page 4 (3 panels)

Panel 1. A large panel. INTERROGATOR-CHAPLAIN ALTHEOUS stands beside COMPANY MASTER SERAPHUS, in the shadow of the stained glass viewing port. It dwarfs them, and starlight slants in through it, casting colourful spots across the floor. The audience chamber is cathedral-like, with huge pennants of the Dark Angels chapter symbol draped from the ceiling, and CHAPTER SERFS scuttling about.



MASTER SERAPHUS carries the draped cloak of his rank, but is not wearing his helmet. His hair is buzz cut, and he has a thick, ropey scar running from beneath one eye and down his face and throat. He's a veteran of many battles. His expression is grim, his jaw set firm. He knows what has to be done.

1. NARRATOR (CAPTION)
"That which they might only find within themselves."

2. MASTER SERAPHUS
We make planetfall within the hour.

Panel 2. This is a shot of BALTUS and members of his tactical squad (2nd Squad, 4th Company) braced inside a SPACE MARINE DROP POD. It's shaking as it's blasted from the orbiting ship.

3. MASTER SERAPHUS (CAPTION)
"We know what we must do."

Panel 3. And this is a view of the planet EXYRION from orbit, as scores of DROP PODS strike its upper atmosphere.

NO COPY.

Page 5 (3 panels)

Panel 1. This is a large panel, comprising the top half of the page. It's our first taste of battle, so it should have real impact. We're on Exyrion. It's an ancient city of the Imperium, but has been abandoned for millennia. There are lots of soaring spires and enormous statuary, distant walkways spanning the sky, cathedral-like buildings – but it's also beginning to crumble and slide into ruin.

DROP PODS are raining down from the sky, blazing trails of fire. One of them is smashing through the spire of a building. Another is slamming into the empty road in the background, rupturing the plascrete surface.

In the foreground, BALTUS and members of his tactical squad (2nd Squad, 4th Company) are engaged in a firefight with a host of CHAOS MUTANTS. These were once humans who've been ravaged by the warp storms. They're really far gone, less human, more chaos monsters, so I think this is a chance to really go to town on some weird and nasty chaos designs.

The SPACE MARINES are in the bottom left of the panel, blasting the CHAOS MUTANTS with their bolters. One of them is using a flamer, while another, PHAEDUS, is calling to BALTUS. The CHAOS MUTANTS are swarming all around them.

1. NARRATOR (CAPTION)
"Yet they are blinded by their faith, their thirst for redemption, and in their blindness they shall rain fire and destruction upon those who would look to them for salvation."

2. SFX (DROP PODS): FOOM

3. SFX (CRASHING DROP POD): KRA-KOOM

4. SFX (BOLTERS): BRRAPPA

5. PHAEDUS
Baltus! On your flank.

Panel 2. Close in on BALTUS. He's throttling a CHAOS MUTANT who has strayed too close, his fist around its throat.

6. CHAOS MUTANT
Crrkk!

7. BALTUS
Aye, brother.

Panel 3. We're still close in on BALTUS. He's twisted around as one of the CHAOS MUTANTS has come up on his left, and is blasting it with his bolter at close quarters. The CHAOS MUTANT is falling back, shredded by the bolter fire.

8. SFX: BRUDDA

9. BALTUS
It is already dead.

INTERIOR PAGES

Tazio's pencils for Page 5. Tazio keeps a busy composition clear by using strong black areas that guide the eye along a central diagonal line. Note how everything on the page, from the clouds, to the falling Drop Pods, to the gaze of the largest Chaos Mutant, guides our eyes back to the squad of Marines.

PENCILS TO INK

The inking stage is more than just tracing over the pencils in ink – it's an opportunity to add depth and texture through areas of solid and feathered black, and lines of different weight. The grit and debris in the explosions, the coils of cloud, the true horror of the Chaos Mutants – they all only take shape at this stage.

THE ART OF COLOURING

The first stage of digital colouring is to fill every area of the page with flat colours, picking out the dominant shapes and preparing the page for shading. You can think of this stage as the 'undercoat' – applying a uniform base colour to each element to make things easier to shade and render.

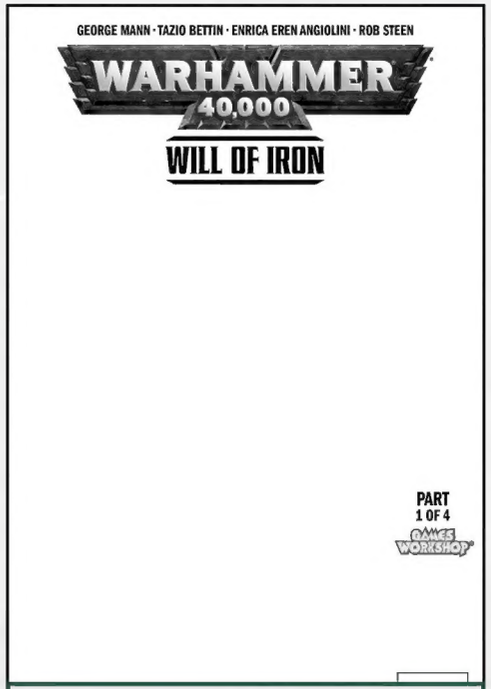
Next, Enrica uses areas of shadow and highlight to add dimensionality to the figures, with differing levels of light – and contrasting hues – drawing the eye to points of interest. The bright explosions focus us on the Marines, while the purple-hued mutants make them pop against the earthy backgrounds.

WILL OF IRON #1 COVER GALLERY

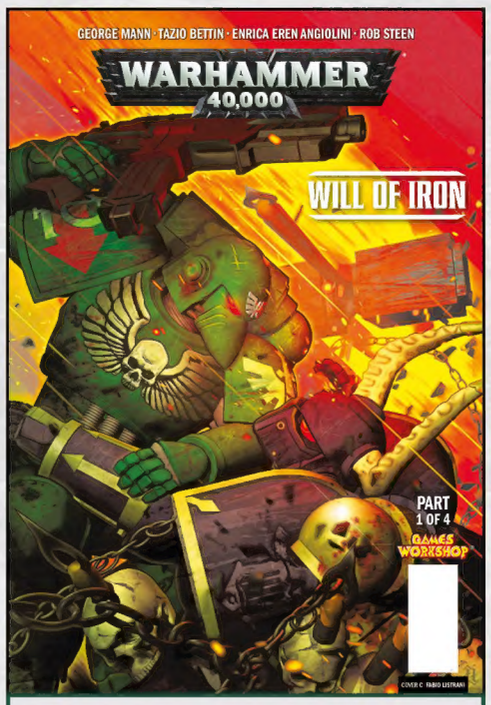
Cover A: Tazio Bettin & Enrica Eren Angiolini

Cover B: John McCrea & Dee Cunniffe

Cover E: Nick Percival



Cover F: Blank Sketch Variant



Cover C: Fabio Listrani

Cover D: Boo Cook

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